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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8193  
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RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0303  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000705

SIPDIS

BAGHDAD FOR AMBASSADOR ERELI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/14/2028

TAGS: [PREL](#) [IS](#) [IR](#) [TU](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN FM WILL SEEK THE SECRETARY'S SUPPORT FOR  
HIS REGIONAL INITIATIVE

REF: A. MANAMA 678

[1](#)B. MANAMA 677

Classified By: CDA Christopher Henzel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Bahrain's Foreign Minister plans to ask the Secretary for diplomatic support for his proposed new regional organization, a grouping that would include Israel. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) On October 14 Ambassador met with Shaikh Ahmad bin Khalifah Al Khalifah, the head of Bahrain's NSC-equivalent, at Shaikh Ahmad's request. Ambassador Saeed Al Faihani of the MFA and DCM also attended.

[1](#)3. (C) Shaikh Ahmad told Ambassador that Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmad Al Khalifah (currently visiting Singapore) plans to ask the Secretary at the October 18 Forum for the Future in Abu Dhabi to support his proposal for a new regional organization (ref B). Ambassador noted in reply that the Department's spokesman commented favorably October 7, and asked what Bahrain planned as its next step for the proposal. Al Faihani replied that the FM appreciated the October 7 statement, but would seek the Secretary's diplomatic support in soliciting broader support.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: The Foreign Minister proposed September 27 a new regional organization that would include the Arab states, Israel, Iran, and Turkey. The U.S., U.K., Israel, Japan, and Arab League SecGen Amre Mousa have made favorable comments in public since then. Bahrain's MFA also claims the Turkish government is privately supportive. Iran quickly and publicly condemned the proposal. Locally, several leading newspapers have run - we think at the government's direction - positive commentary, while the many critical statements from MPs and pundits we heard last week have faded out. When parliament re-opens next week, we will see whether MPs follow up on their pledges to summon the Foreign Minister.

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HENZEL